



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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RECOGNIZE OUR STATE'S DAIRY FARMERS

By Congressman Ron Kind

As the calendar turns to June, we in Wisconsin recognize the many contributions provided by our dairy farm families. Wisconsin's dairy industry is nearly a \$21 billion industry, fueling the economies of many of our state's large cities, small villages, and rural countryside.

The dairy industry is an important staple in our state's economy. In addition to the 15,000-plus dairy farms that dot our state's rural landscape, our state is the home of hundreds of cheese, butter, and specialty dairy products manufacturing facilities, each providing a strong, viable tax base and family-supporting incomes.

Growing our state's dairy industry is good for our state's economy. Statistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison indicates that each cow in Wisconsin generates between \$15,000 and \$17,000 of economic activity. Thus, if our state seeks to grow its economy, assisting our dairy industry is a good place to start.

As a member of Congress from a large dairy producing district, it is imperative that all dairy farms are treated equitably and fairly. In the Congressional district I represent in western Wisconsin, dairying is done in many different forms – from traditional tie-stalls and stanchion barns, to parlors, organic and grazing-based.

Regardless of herd size or dairying type, dairy farming is important to the people and economy of Wisconsin. Our state's dairy family dairy farms provide the consumers of our nation and world with a variety of abundant, nutritious, high-quality dairy products.

Dairy products also provide many wholesome nutritional benefits for individuals of all ages. The recently released USDA food pyramid recommends consumption of two cups of dairy products daily for children under nine years and three cups of dairy products daily for everyone else. Recent studies have prominently mentioned the nutritional importance of dairy products for active, healthy lifestyle children and seniors. As a result, during reauthorization of the national school lunch act and children's nutrition programs, I authorized legislation that provided school students with a greater choice of dairy options and milk blends.

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Milk and milk products provide a number of important benefits, both dietary and economic. During the month of June, be good to your health, and enjoy a glass of cold milk, a chocolate milkshake, a slice of cheese, or any other of your favorite dairy products. While doing so, take a moment to reflect and say thanks to the hard work, dedication, and commitment of our state's dairy farms.